

February 25, 2012

Herman Debose, Chair  
Department of Sociology  
321 Santa Susana Hall  
Northridge, CA 91330-8318

Dear Dr. Debose:

Please accept this as my letter of support to consider Dr. Jerald Schutte as the awardee for the Distinguished Teaching Award. Having taken three courses with him, two undergraduate and one graduate, I can attest to how much of an outstanding instructor he has been.

As a student whose strengths are not in math or science, his instruction helped me develop skills in quantitative analysis, and become well prepared for my graduate courses. The research I began in his Advanced Statistics course has been built further in the Social Research course in the following term, and has contributed to a paper that I will be presenting at the Pacific Sociological Association Annual Meeting next month. Furthermore, this research is also serving as the quantitative portion of my thesis data.

Some of Jerry's many strengths as an instructor include his patience and understanding that repetition helps students struggling with statistics to gain mastery. Moreover, he designs courses so that we will learn how to apply the knowledge gained, in addition to mastering the course requirements. Also, understanding that working together will positively impact class performance, so he arranged for us to get beyond our shyness and form relationships.

Jerry is also a very dedicated, caring, and personable teacher. He always made himself available, and provided guidance and assistance outside of the classroom. In Fall 2009, when I took his combined undergraduate Statistics and Methods course, at least half of our class would attend his office hours, and basically hold another class session. Jerry accommodated us wanting to see us succeed, and being moved by our dedication to learn.

What is most outstanding about Jerry is his dedication to his students and family. In Fall 2009, his wife had a car wreck that left her in need of personalized care. Jerry managed to juggle his time to take care of his wife and his needy students as we approached our final exam. I just hope that he did not overtax himself trying to manage so much. Some of my classmates and I were so appreciative of all he had done for us that we gave him a small token of our appreciation at the end of the term.

I hope I have been able to convey how much of a strong candidate Dr. Jerald Schutte is for this Distinguished Teaching award. Please accept my letter of support for his consideration. I hope he wins!

Sincerely,

Nayla Huq